

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 5, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, due to the passing of my father, on Wednesday, October 3, 2007, and Thursday, October 4, 2007, I missed rollcall vote Nos. 932 through 948. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on the motion on ordering the previous question on the rule H. Res. 701; "aye" on the motion on ordering the previous question on the rule H. Res. 702; "aye" on H. Res. 702; "aye" on the Conyers amendment to H.R. 928; "nay" on the motion to recommit H.R. 928; "aye" on H.R. 928; "aye" on the motion to postpone the vote to override the president's veto of the children's health care bill; "nay" on the motion to recommit H.R. 2740; "aye" on H.R. 2740; "aye" on the motion on ordering the previous question on the rule H. Res. 704; "aye" on the rule H. Res. 704; "aye" on the motion on ordering the previous question on the rule H. Res. 703; "aye" on the rule H. Res. 703; "nay" on the motion to recommit H.R. 3246; "aye" on H.R. 3246; "nay" on motion to recommit H.R. 3648; and "aye" on H.R. 3648.

RECOGNIZING MELISSA HENSLEY
FOR ACHIEVING THE MISSOURI
AMERICAN STAR OF TEACHING

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 5, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Melissa Hensley, of Milan, MO. Melissa Hensley is the recipient of the Missouri American Star of Teaching Award.

Melissa serves as a Literary Coach for Milan C-2 Elementary in Milan, MO. She works closely with other educational professionals and parents to increase students' reading abilities. Melissa also acts as a mentor to beginner teachers and represented Missouri schools by presenting at the National Reading First Conference in Reno, NV. Currently, she is working on completing her master's degree in Reading.

Each year, American Stars of Teaching receives over 4,000 nominations for this award. From this, the organization picks one educator from each state. This year, Melissa represented Missouri by earning the American Star of Teaching Award.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in honoring Melissa Hensley whose dedication and service to the people of Milan has been truly exceptional.

HONORING BURCHELL NURSERY

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 5, 2007

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Burchell Nursery upon celebrating their 65th anniversary in the nursery business.

Irvin Burchell began his small business with an acre and a half in central California, just outside of Modesto, in 1942. Mr. Burchell's idea was "Plant good trees on good land, take care of them, and they will take care of you." Three generations later the company has grown to more than 1,000 acres, from 10,000 trees to 2.5 million. Burchell Nursery began with just peach trees. Today they grow peach, nectarine, cherry, apricot, plum, prune, apple, pomegranate, pistachio, citrus, almond, and walnut trees in more than 200 varieties.

Irvin Burchell's focus on quality led to the development of the state of California's own tree certification program. The Nursery began in the 1960s and has worked toward eliminating viruses from commercial tree varieties and establishing clean sources of bud wood. They have created an ongoing sampling process to ensure virus-free trees. This has become the model that is used by the state today.

Burchell Nursery changed hands in 1970 to Bill Burchell, who oversaw dramatic growth in the company. Through out the decade 700 acres were added in Oakdale, CA, and during the 1980s another branch was opened in Fresno, CA.

Now in the third generation, Burchell Nursery is headed by Tom Burchell. Tom has renewed the company's focus on research. Tom has pioneered the development of the nursery's container tree lines. With special growing techniques, and a uniquely designed container, the program has expanded from about 8,000 container trees per year to more than 170,000 in 2006. The breeding program has also flourished under Tom, with more than 40 patented varieties to the nursery's credit.

Burchell Nursery has been a constant leader in the community and in the state of California. To the state, Burchell Nursery has provided innovative ways of growing, nurturing and protecting trees from a number of viruses. In the local community, they have not only provided employment, but they have also given back in the form of donations and support to various groups. Burchell Nursery has always been a strong supporter of 4-H and Future Farmers of America. They have provided scholarships to outstanding agriculture students at Modesto Junior College and contributed trees to the orchards of elementary and secondary schools. They have also been active supporters of the agriculture research programs at Modesto Junior College, California State University at Fresno, University of California at Davis and have provided financial support to the Stanislaus County Agriculture Center.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Burchell Nursery on 65 years of business. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Burchell Nursery many years of continued success.

THE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF
THE ASSASSINATION OF ANNA
POLITKOVSKAYA

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 5, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, as chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission,

I have followed closely the difficulties faced by journalists throughout the nations of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Many of these dedicated men and women risk financial ruin, physical intimidation and even death at the hands of those who fear honesty and truth in print or in the electronic media.

In this connection, I would call the attention of my distinguished colleagues to a tragic anniversary: Sunday, October 7th, 2007, marks the one-year anniversary of the death of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya, who was shot and killed by an unknown assailant or assailants at the entrance to her apartment building in Moscow.

Ms. Politkovskaya was a brave and prolific journalist whose name has become synonymous with journalistic courage under fire. Her vivid, on-the-spot reporting brought to the world's attention the bloody war in Russia's breakaway region of Chechnya and the suffering of its victims, both Chechen and Russian. In her book "The Dirty War," a compilation of articles she had written previously on the conflict, she demonstrated a unique gift for telling the stories of people caught in the crossfire between the Russian military forces, brutal Chechen paramilitaries operating on Moscow's behalf, the indigenous Chechen resistance, and Islamic extremists who rushed in from all over the world to exploit the conflict. One reviewer wrote that "her writing focuses on the ethics of everyday life and individual misery in the midst of Chechnya's catastrophe. It is Chechen civilians and Russian conscript soldiers who are the centers of concern here. Politkovskaya's most withering scorn is reserved for the political and military classes that initiated this war, together with its profiteers, opportunists, and contract soldiers straight from Russia's prisons."

For her hard-hitting and courageous reporting Ms. Politkovskaya earned numerous journalism awards, including the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's annual Prize for Journalism and Democracy in 2003. In 2004, she shared the Olof Palme Prize for human rights work with fellow Russian human rights activists Ludmila Alexeyeva and Sergei Kovalev.

On the day Anna Politkovskaya was killed, she was due to file a story on the looted reconstruction money intended for Chechnya, and use of torture and kidnapping by pro-Moscow Chechen paramilitaries. Clearly, her reporting had made a lot of enemies and threatened a lot of comfortable positions.

Anna Politkovskaya was an American citizen, born during the Cold War in New York City, where she was exposed to democracy, a free press, and a world of ideas denied to most Soviet citizens. Graduating in 1980 from Moscow State University, she worked for the Soviet newspaper Izvestiya during the halcyon days of perestroika. In 1999, she joined the staff of Novaya Gazeta, one of the few national Russian newspapers at that time that took a critical line toward the Russian government. Her dedication to exposing the tragic events in Chechnya resulted in around 50 trips to that cauldron of conflict.

In 2004, she made an attempt to travel to Beslan during the murderous school siege, in that village but fell ill with food poisoning on the way, an event which some took as a deliberate poison attempt by her enemies to kill her. She was very aware that her actions angered many in the governments of both